THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir. A notification to this effect has been issued on 9-11-92.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The modality of division of the Delhi District Court is receiving Government's attention on priority basis.

Reviewed of Drought Prone Area Programme

*159. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have critically reviewed the Drought Prone Area Programme since its inception; if so, the findings of the review in general and Maharashtra—in particular;

(b) what was the base year for identification of D.P.A.P. areas and the criteria to decide the chronically droughts prone areas along with the number of districts initially selected and added later on, yearwise;

(c) whether the criteria and the areas identified have undergone changes from time to time over the last twenty years;

(d) whether the areas after intensive planning and heavy investment as compared to other adjacent districts have remained chronically drought affected even now;

(e) whether Government propose to consider to select other districts—equally drought affected and having more severity of drought; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) : (a) A Task Force constituted by Planning Commission (Minhas Committee) reviewed the rural development programmes including DPAP in 1973. The Task Force recommended that DPAP should aim at integrated development of agriculture with focus on restoration of ecological balance. Apart from irrigation, forestry, soil and moisture conservation, it recommended changes in agronomic practices and restructuring of cropping pattern, livestock development, rural communication and drinking water supply as important elements of the strategy of Integrated Rural Development in drought prone areas.

The programme was once again reviewed by the Task Force (Swaminathan Committee) in 1982. The Task Force endorsed the on-going approach and strategy but redefined the scope and objectives of the programme. Emphasis was laid on more productive agriculture, dryland as well as irrigated and vegetative cover. Some activities like drinking water supply, rural communication, assistance to small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers which are taken care of under other schemes were excluded from the purview of DPAP. The Task Force also evolved the criteria for identification of area on the basis of rainfall and irrigation factor.

As regard Maharashtra there is no specific finding or recommendations in these reviews.

(b) and (c) DPAP was launched in 1973-74 which formed the base year for identification of drought prone areas. The Task Force, 1973 divided drought prone areas into following three categories :

(i) Areas with rainfall of 375 mm or less covering 9 districts of Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat.

(ii) Areas having rainfall between 375 mm to 750 mm covering 18 districts of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Jammu & Kashmir.

(iii) Areas having rainfall exceeding 750 mm comprising 27 districts in the States of Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal.

Besides the fifty four districts as above, the programme was in operation in twenty more adjoining districts with similar characterstics.

The Task Force, 1982 suggested the following criteria for inclusion/exclusion of areas under the programme :—

	Annual rainfall	% age irrigated area to net sown area
(1) for exclusion of existing blocks	(i) below 750 mm	above 40%
	(ii) above 750 mm	above 30%
(2) for inclusion of	(i) below 750 mm	below 20%
	(ii) below 1125 mm and above 750 mm	below 15%
	(iii) above 1125 mm	Below 10%

As administrative factor, the Task Force suggested that the number of blocks to be covered in a district should be more than 20% of total blocks in the district. Accordingly DPAP was recommended for 511 blocks of 69 districts in 13 States.

An Inter Departmental Group reviewed the criteria adopted by the Task Force and made the following modifications in 1984 :

(i) Blocks earlier included under the programme should not be excluded on the grounds of small coverage in the district (i.e. less than 20% of total number of blocks in the district), if the stipulated conditions regarding irrigation and rainfall were satisfied.

(ii) No new blocks should be included under the programme if average annual rainfall is 1650 mm and above.

The coverage of the programme at present is based on the criteria laid down by the Task Force (1982) and as modified by the Inter Departmental Group (1984). At present, DPAP is under implementation in 615 blocks of 92 districts in 13 States.

(d) The periodical progress reviews made by the Central Sanctioning Committee (CSC) on DPAP indicate that there has been some improvement in mitigation of drought conditions in these districts through land development, water resources development and providing adequate vegetative cover. The Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO), Planning Commission, is presently engaged in an all India evaluation of DPAP and a clearer picture will emerge after receipt of its report.

(e) and (f) The matter relating to selection of other districts or exclusion of some of the existing areas will be looked into by a separate Committee.

Distribution of Foodgrains under Anti-Poverty Programmes

*160. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM :

SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the distribution of foodgrains under anti-poverty programmes has declined during the last three years and it has gone to 17 thousand tonne in 1991-92 from 22 lakh tonne in 1987, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the decline is due to inadequate availability of foodgrains for public distribution system;

(c) whether Government propose to discontinue "food for work" scheme in view of the non-availability of foodgrains; and

(d) if so, what measures Government propose to take to provide safety net to the rural poor to save them from starvation and malnutrition ?